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INTERNS TO HELP ARIZONA IMPROVE ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE ***May 23 Symposium to Discuss Education, Energy and Environment***

(Phoenix)— Arizona college students can get an early start in improving our environment, thanks to a new internship program aimed at enhancing the state's environmental performance and economic stability. Arizona Environmental Leadership Through Mentoring (AZELM), a new non-profit corporation, is marking its debut in Arizona with a statewide paid internship program, pairing up students from three state universities with large and small businesses, government and non-profit organizations.

"This is a win-win partnership between government, business and education that helps everyone involved," said Don Stapley, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. "The students get experience and the companies reduce waste and improve productivity."

The new program, expected to start this summer, will match qualified interns with companies to perform projects that benefit both the environment and the company. Guided by AZELM members, students will research, evaluate and implement systems to reduce environmental impacts and develop a case study that will be presented to interested stakeholders at the end of the internship.

AZELM will discuss this program as well as other important elements of the new partnership at the **Symposium for Environmental and Economic Development (SEED) on May 23, 2002 from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Phoenix Airport Marriott, 1101 N. 44th St., Phoenix.**

The event will include national and local speakers discussing issues such as renewable energy, environmental responsibilities, mentoring through green business, and community and state economic issues. Register on-line at www.maricopa.gov/sbeap. The \$75 fee includes breakfast and lunch.

"The program for this event has something for everyone, whether you're a small business, large company, or just looking for professional development," said Richard Polito, creator of AZELM and manager of the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program with the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department.

About AZELM

Arizona Leadership through Mentoring assists Arizona businesses and organizations by providing education, information and resources for sustainable development and innovative environmental, health and safety strategies. The corporation is comprised of representatives from large and small businesses, academia and government. For more information and a list of members, go to www.azelm.org.